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## WASHINGTON LETTER.

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WASHINGTON, MARCH 15, 1889.

THE CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES.—The Act providing for the eleventh Census (1890), passed during the last hours of the 50th Congress, seems to create a *permanent* office in the Department of the Interior, to be denominated the Census Office. A chief officer is to be appointed by the President of the United States, to be called the Superintendent of Census, whose duty it shall be to superintend and direct the taking of the eleventh Census, “*and to perform such other duties*” as may be required by law. The annual salary of this office is fixed at \$6,000.

The Act prescribes and limits the scope of the next Census to an enumeration of the population ; social statistics relating to the population ; statistics relating to the products of manufactories ; agricultural and mining industries ; mortality and vital statistics ; valuations and public indebtedness ; recorded indebtedness of private corporations and individuals ; statistics relating to railroad corporations ; incorporated express, telegraph and insurance companies ; and, finally, a list of the names, organizations, and length of service of surviving soldiers, sailors and marines in the War of the Rebellion, and the widows of such soldiers, sailors and marines.

Compared with the subjects enumerated in the Census of 1880, this arrangement would seem to eliminate the

following : forestry, ship-building, newspapers, petroleum, coke, building-stones, precious metals, water-power, wages, strikes, defective and dependent classes, power and machinery employed in manufactures, ice industry ; and to *add* insurance statistics and a list of surviving soldiers, sailors and marines (and their widows) of the late war. It is also provided that there shall be an inquiry as to the number of negroes, mulattoes, quadroons and octoroons ; and from official sources information relating to animals not on farms. The topics in the last Census which are to be omitted in the new were most of them ably and exhaustively treated ; so that, with the means within the reach of almost any one, they can be applied to conditions of later date. The *new* matter therefore introduced into the eleventh Census may be considered an extension of the great Census of 1880. Exclusive of printing, engraving and binding, the cost of the Census is limited to \$6,000,000, of which amount \$1,000,000 are appropriated by the present Act.

A descriptive table of former census publications will be found of interest :

Census of.	No. of Vols.	When Published.	Title of Volume.
1790	1	1792.	1. Return of the whole number of persons within the several districts of the United States.
1800	1	1801.	1. Same title as last.
1810	2	Not stated.	1. Aggregate amount of each description of persons within the United States, etc.
		1813.	2. A series of tables of the several branches of American manufactures, exhibiting them in every county of the Union, so far as they are returned in the reports of the marshals and of the secretaries of the territories and of their respective assistants in the autumn of the year 1810, etc.

1820	2	1821.	1. Census for 1820, etc.
		1823.	2. Digest of accounts of manufacturing establishments, etc.
1830	1	1832.	1. Fifth census or enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States.
1840	4	1841.	1. Compendium of the enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States, etc.
		1841.	2. Sixth census or enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States.
		1841.	3. Statistics of the United States, etc.
		Not given.	4. Census of Pensioners for Revolutionary and military services, with their names, ages, and places of residence, etc.
1850	4	1853.	1. The seventh census of the United States.
		1854.	2. Statistical view of the United States.
		1855.	3. Mortality statistics of the seventh census.
		1859.	4. Digest of the statistics of manufactures.
1860	4	1864.	1. Population.
		1864.	2. Agriculture.
		1865.	3. Manufactures.
		1866.	4. Mortality and miscellaneous statistics.
1870	4	1872.	1. Compendium.
		1872.	2. Population and social statistics.
		1872.	3. Vital statistics.
		1872.	4. Wealth and industry.
1880	24	1883.	1. Statistics of population.
		1883.	2. Statistics of manufactures.
		1883.	3. Statistics of agriculture.
		1883.	4. Agencies of transportation.
		1884.	5. Cotton production in the U. S., part 1.
		1884.	6. Cotton production in the U. S., part 2.
		1884.	7. Valuation, taxation and public indebtedness.
		1884.	8. Newspapers, Alaska, Ship-building.
		1884.	9. Forest trees of N. America (with an atlas).
		1884.	10. Petroleum, coke, and building-stones.
		1885.	11. Mortality and vital statistics, part 1.
		1886.	12. Mortality and vital statistics, part 2.
		1885.	13. Statistics and technology of precious metals.
		1885.	14. Mining laws of the United States.
		1886.	15. Mining industries of the United States.
		1885.	16. Water power of the United States, part 1.
		1887.	17. Water power of the United States, part 2.

- 1886. 18. Social statistics of cities, part 1.
- 1887. 19. Social statistics of cities, part 2.
- 1886. 20. Wages, prices of necessities of life, trade societies, strikes and lockouts.
- 1888. 21. Defective, dependent and delinquent classes.
- 1888. 22. Power and machinery employed in manufactures and the ice industry.
- 1883. 23. Compendium, part 1.
- 1883. 24. Compendium, part 2.

It will be observed that many volumes (fully half) of the Census of 1880 were published five, six, seven and even eight years after date. This delay was not so much the fault of the collaborators as of Congress in dealing out insufficient appropriations to pay for the printing. On two occasions the work absolutely came to a standstill, although the material was in the printers' hands. Let us hope that the results of the eleventh Census will be fully known before the dawn of 1900.

ALASKA.—The expeditions sent out by the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey for a number of years past to survey the coasts and waters of Alaska have made contributions of much value to our knowledge of the country, the resources of which are but just beginning to be developed.\* A steamer for surveying purposes has been sent to south-eastern Alaska during 1885, 1886, 1887 and 1888. As one result of these and previous surveys, forty-five charts of Alaskan harbors have been published.

Prof. George Davidson,† who for more than twenty years has made Alaska and its vicinity the subject of very close study, urges the necessity of liberal appropriations "for the purpose of charting the dangers of the

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\* F. M. Thorn, in Bulletin No. 2, U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey.

† Bulletin No. 4, U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey.

wild and rocky coasts of that region, to determine the currents along an intricate and curving seaboard, to determine geographical positions, to survey the approaches to all harbors of refuge, to suggest proper aids to navigation, and to determine the limits and depths of the fishing banks. He has ascertained that the cod fishing banks of Alaska are *four times the area of those in the region of Newfoundland*. The eastern part of Behring Sea is a "mighty reservoir of cod," the area within the limits of fifty fathoms depth being no less than 18,000 square miles. In this sea, fishing must be done as it is done off Newfoundland—without harbors of refuge but in much less depth of water. The fishing banks along the south coast of Alaska bordering the Gulf of Alaska, and south of part of the Aleutian chain will add not less than 45,000 square miles, making a total of 63,000 square miles, with an average depth of fifty fathoms of water. If the fishing limits are extended to 100 fathoms, the area of the fishing banks will be increased to not less than 100,000 square miles.

The salmon throughout Alaska are much more numerous than in the waters of California, Oregon and Washington. In some localities the salmon are crowded so thick that the progress of a boat is impeded by them, and in case of a sudden south-east storm the fish are driven on the beach in innumerable quantities. A Russian navigator asserted, in 1867, that "under such circumstances he had seen the beach strewn two and three feet deep with stranded salmon." Mr. Davidson, from personal experience, pronounces the Chilkah salmon the highest colored and finest flavored on the Pacific coast. "There is no such field on this earth as these Alaska

waters for this fishing development ;” and he asserts that Alaska is an inexhaustible store-house of wealth in its fisheries, forests and minerals.

COLUMBIA RIVER.—A description and map of the Columbia River from the Dalles to Celilo accompanies a recent Report of the Board of Engineers constituted by the Secretary of War to examine the obstructions to navigation in that river. It is stated that the Columbia River is navigable for deep sea vessels for a distance of about 100 miles from its mouth. The next stretch of 100 miles, interrupted by the Cascades Rapids affords boat navigation with a minimum depth of eight feet. Above Celilo the low water depth on bars is about four feet, and the river is navigable to Priest’s Rapids, a distance of nearly 200 miles. The obstruction of Priest’s Rapids puts an end to navigation, but it is almost certain that this obstruction is susceptible of improvement for navigation. It is the announced policy of the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company to run boats on the Clearwater, Middle Snake and Columbia River above Priest’s Rapids as soon as regions along those parts of the rivers become settled.

The Board of Engineers recommend the construction of a single-track portage railway from Celilo to The Dalles.

At a recent hearing before a Committee of Congress, Dr. J. W. Powell made some interesting statements in regard to the development of his plans for the irrigation of the arid regions. Pointing on a map to a river in New Mexico known as the Jemes, which is an affluent of the Rio Grande, he remarked that it was called a creek below and a river above, nearer the sources ; and

he said that more than half, perhaps two-thirds, of all the rivers of the arid regions that head in the mountains run out into the desert plains or valleys, and are lost in the sand ; but all the rivers, even those which carry their waters to the sea, diminish very greatly from the point where they leave the mountains to the point where they reach more humid lands below.

Speaking of measurements he said : “ We measure water by acre feet. This is something devised during the last season. It was found that people did not understand the ordinary terms of measurements, and so a new unit was devised, and it has come into use within the last five or six months through the technical journals and has been adopted by the people of the west. An “acre foot” of stationed water is an acre of water a foot deep. An acre foot of water will *on an average* in the United States irrigate for the season an acre of land. The storage reservoirs are to be made simply by constructing a dam. In reply to the question whether the Government should build the dams, he said his idea was that the Government should make the surveys, select the lands to be irrigated and the sites for reservoirs and canals, and reserve them so that they should not fall into the hands of individuals to be held for speculative purposes, and then let anybody who wants to, build the dams and canals. An acre of land irrigated is at once brought up from nothing to the value of thirty to two hundred dollars. There are eight States and Territories where agriculture is wholly dependent upon irrigation, and there are six other States and Territories chiefly dependent upon it.

Dr. Powell declined to increase his estimate of one



year's appropriation from \$350,000 to \$500,000, on the ground that he could not find the men to do the work.

Not the least among the benefits to be derived from this irrigation investigation is the stimulus and aid it affords to the topographical survey and the mapping of the Territories and States. It will shorten this great work by many years, for the reason that Congress is disposed to provide liberally for irrigation, while a recognition of the importance of topographical maps wins its way inch by inch.

SKY CHARTS.—The Government of the United States was represented at the Astro-Photographic Congress held at Paris about two years ago, when it was decided that the work of charting the sky by photographic process should be begun. A few of the Governments had pledged, in advance, their support of the plans to be agreed upon, and most of the others have since provided the necessary means. It was assumed that the part of this plan of astronomical photography assigned to the United States would devolve upon the Naval Observatory, and Congress has been asked to appropriate \$50,000 for buildings, instruments, mountings and material.

PRECIOUS METALS.—The gold product of the United States for 1888 is reported at 1,644,927 fine ounces, of the value of \$33,644,927, being an excess of \$175,000 over 1887. The silver product was 45,783,632 fine ounces, of the commercial value of about \$43,000,000, an increase of 4,515,328 fine ounces over 1887. In addition, about 10,000,000 ounces of silver were extracted from foreign ores and bullion. The average price of

silver was about 94c; the average bullion value of the dollar, 72.6. The estimated consumption of gold and silver in the industries during 1888 was: gold, \$14,600,000, silver, \$3,280,000.

ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.—The boundary question between Chili and the Argentine Government, according to late intelligence from Buenos Aires, still remains unsettled, but the negotiations for determining the line which divides the two countries are quietly proceeding within the stipulations of the 23d of July, 1881. The settlement of the limits controversy between the Argentine Republic and Brazil has been referred to a joint commission, which with a technical staff of assistants has been at work for more than a year in the exploration of the disputed territory in the Misiones. The only doubt which arose was in reference to the identity of the Rivers Santo Antonio and Iguazú, maintained by the Argentine commissioners and denied by the Brazilians; and it is thought that an understanding has now been reached on the subject.\* In regard to the boundary question between Bolivia and the Argentine Republic, nothing has been done during the past year, both governments maintaining the existing *status quo* in the most friendly manner.

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\* The dictionaries on both sides support the Argentines. Saint-Adolphe's *Diccionario Geographico, etc., do Brazil* (Lopes de Moura's edition), describes the Santo-Antonio as follows: "A small river in the Province of S. Paulo. It rises near the source of the river Pepiri and unites with the river Curitiba, or Iguazú, 20 leagues above the falls of the Funil." Four leagues beyond this fall, the Iguazú empties into the Paraná.

Paz Soldan, in his *Diccionario Geog. Estadist. Nac. Argentino*, says of the Iguazú: "It is full and navigable as far as the famous Victoria Fall, which is among the highest in the world (197 feet). . . . It rises in the mountains of S. Paulo in Brazil, and forms the boundary with that country from the San Antonio mouth to the junction with the Paraná." (*G.C.H.*)

The Argentine Republic appears to be on the road to national prosperity. Political quiet pervades the country. Revolutions and attempts at revolutions are matters of the past. The guarantees of the Constitution having the sanction of the people, the laws are permitted to be peacefully executed. The new President, in his late message to the Argentine Congress, said: "My policy has been peace, toleration and conciliation; the fullest liberty for the expression of public opinion, and the free exercise of personal rights." The Government encourages immigration from Europe, the last Congress having voted 50,000 passages to be advanced to agriculturists and artisans intending to settle in the country. The Commissioner of Immigration is said to be having grand success in Europe with the poorer classes. The American Consul, however, entreats his countrymen not to try their fortunes there, "where everything is so different and so primitive compared with what they have enjoyed at home."

Government concessions have largely stimulated the construction of railroads in the Republic. Thirteen guaranteed roads represent a total length of 5770 miles, but numerous applications for new lines without such guarantees have lately been made.

The inter-provincial commerce of the country by river has increased from \$27,502,468 in 1881, to \$73,821,583 in 1887. Progress in agriculture is very marked. In several leading crops the surplus for export is advancing in rapid ratio, the shipments having increased from 145,224 tons in 1882, to 706,254 tons in 1887.

CHEROKEE TONGUE—The Director of the Bureau of Ethnology of the Smithsonian Institution has adopted

the conclusion of a number of the members of that Bureau, that the Cherokee language belongs to the Iroquoian stock. This has hitherto been considered an open question.

AMERICANS IN CHINA.—The total number of American citizens resident in China in 1888 was 1022, of which number 28 were diplomatic and consular, and 506 were missionaries.

TOBAGO.—The annexation of the island of Tobago to Trinidad took effect January 1, 1889.

H.